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QUESTION OF CYPRUS

Letter dated 22 September 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 22 September 1997, addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Aytuğ Plümer, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex which contains a letter of His Excellency Mr. Rauf R. Denktaş, President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, dated 19 September 1997, would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hüseyin E. ÇELEM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Letter dated 22 September 1997 from Mr. Aytuğ Plümer addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the letter dated 19 September 1997 addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Rauf R. Denktaş, President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, in connection with the Greek Cypriot side's decision to purchase the sophisticated S-300 missile system from the Russian Federation.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its appendix could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aytuğ PLÜMER
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

APPENDIX

Letter dated 19 September 1997 from Mr. Rauf R. Denktash addressed to the Secretary-General

In previous correspondence the Turkish Cypriot side has expressed to Your Excellency its extreme concern regarding the Greek Cypriot side's decision to procure a sophisticated missile system from the Russian Federation, and the very serious repercussions this will have on the stability of the island and region. Regarding these negative developments, I would like to reiterate our concerns.

Despite extensive international reaction and condemnation, the Greek Cypriot side continues to assert its determination to deploy the S-300 missile system, which is scheduled to arrive on the island in mid-1998. The Greek Cypriot leader Glafcos Clerides stated: "our acquisition of the missiles is not negotiable", while in a recent interview with a Greek Cypriot daily (Agon, 24 August 1997), his Foreign Minister, Yannakis Cassoulides, also reaffirmed the Greek Cypriot side's irresponsible determination to deploy the missiles. Representatives from the Russian Federation have also repeated their Government's pledge to sell the missiles despite the highly dangerous ramifications it will institute.

As a permanent member of the Security Council, which has placed the Cyprus problem high on its agenda for over 34 years, the Russian Federation should recognize its responsibility to maintain peace on the island rather than encouraging conflict by conducting potentially destabilizing transactions. The sale of the arms to the Greek Cypriot side by the Russian Federation is also in direct contravention of numerous Security Council resolutions that call for a halt in military proliferation on the island. In two of the latest resolutions (1092 (1996) of 23 December 1996 and 1117 (1997) of 26 June 1997) the Council reiterated concern regarding "the continuing excessive levels of military forces and armaments in the Republic of Cyprus and the rate at which they are being expanded, upgraded and modernized, including by the introduction of sophisticated weaponry".

Similarly the sale is also a blatant violation of the 1993 Principles Governing Conventional Arms Transfers of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), of which the Russian Federation is a signatory, where it categorically states that each participating State had to consider "the internal and regional situation in and around the recipient country, in the light of existing tensions or armed conflicts" and were subsequently obliged to "avoid transfers which would be likely to endanger peace, introduce destabilizing military capabilities into a region, or otherwise contribute to regional instability".

The acquisition of the technologically sophisticated missile system by the Greek Cypriots, which threatens to take the arms build-up on Cyprus to a new and disturbing qualitative level, adds a highly destabilizing dimension to the military equation on the island and region between guarantor States Turkey and Greece. The S-300 missile system will give the Greek Cypriot side long-range

capabilities for the first time, enabling them to strike military installations on mainland Turkey, which renders them a tangible and direct threat to the security of Turkey and is an unacceptable challenge to Turkey's rights and obligations as a guarantor power. The offensive threat engendered by the Greek Cypriot side's purchase of the S-300 missile system has to be viewed in the context of its ongoing massive armament efforts within the framework of the Greek-Greek Cypriot "joint defence doctrine". Since its implementation in 1993, the Greek Cypriot administration, together with Greece, has accelerated the build-up of arms and armed forces in southern Cyprus bringing current military expenditure in southern Cyprus in excess of $2 million a day, which in per capita terms is amongst the highest in the world.

This pact has also paved the way for the construction of air and sea bases in southern Cyprus, intended for Greek fighter planes and warships. According to recent reports circulated in the Greek Cypriot media, the base located in the Paphos region will become operational during the course of the annual Greek-Greek Cypriot military exercises, code-named "Nikiforos", which are scheduled to take place in October.

The Government of Turkey has repeatedly stressed that it will not remain passive in the face of these provocative and hostile actions and has expressed its determination, as a guarantor Power, to continue to exercise its rights and obligations to protect the Turkish Cypriots and to preserve the balance and stability in the region. The Greek Cypriot leadership aims to utilize its purchase of the S-300 missile system as a bargaining tool in order to manipulate the negotiation process to its advantage. We, on our part, will not allow the Greek Cypriot side to realize this pernicious objective, especially in view of the threat it engenders to the peace on the island.

It is irrefutably true that these developments, generated by the Greek Cypriot administration, have had a gravely negative effect on the political atmosphere of the island. This atmosphere will further be poisoned if the Greek Cypriot side fails to reverse its decision to deploy the said missiles. We hope that Your Excellency will do his utmost in impressing upon the Greek Cypriot leadership not to go ahead with the deployment of the missiles, which will, indeed, be a most irresponsible action.

(Signed) Rauf R. DENKTAŞ
President